tional Wasteland Development Board in 1985 for massive afforestation.

**Tissue culture method for producing saplings**

1442 SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been many R & D and other schemes for using tissue culture method for producing saplings, if so, the details of these schemes indicating the funds spent during the five year plans so far, plan-wise; and

(b) the number of saplings produced through tissue culture and what is the estimated survival rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) Yes Sir. The Department of Biotechnology sanctioned two projects in February, 1989 for setting up pilot plant facilities at National Chemical Laboratory, Pune and Tata Energy Research Institute, New Delhi with a view to carry out large scale micropropagation and bulk multiplication of a elite forest trees using tissue culture technique. Research and development work in the above plants has commenced in the interim facilities; when the pilot plants are fully commissioned, the production potential will be of the order of 5—10 million plantlets per year. DBT has also started 8 R&D projects for developing and standardizing tissue culture technique for plantlet regeneration from nationally important forest tree species. Once the tissue culture technique is developed and standardized through the above R&D Projects, the know-how will be adopted by the two pilot plants for large scale production of planting material. The funds released during the 7th Five Year Plan (mostly towards the end of the plan period) on the above projects is Rs. 4.46 crores.

(b) The total number of tissue culture plantlets produced in the above projects during the 7th Plan Period is 23,000. The present survival rate is 85-90 per cent.

**Opposition of English as Medium of Instruction**

1443. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are opposed to the use of English as a medium of instructions in schools as reported in the Times of India dated the 5th April, 1990;

(b) if so, whether this policy is conducive to higher and professional education in the country; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The National Curricular Framework for Elementary and Secondary Education prepared by National Council of Educational Research and Training in consultation with State Governments envisages study of only language i.e. the mother tongue/regional language at the primary stage. None of State Governments has put any ban on use of English in educational institutions. The National Policy on Educaion-1968 envisaged that urgent steps should be taken to adopt regional languages as medium of instruction upto the University level. In pursuance of this policy, several Universities have taken steps to introduce progressively one or more regional languages as media of instruction for specified courses offered by them. However, according to the information available, 45 Universities are offering courses exclusively through English medium at the undergraduate level. Most of the Agricultural Universities use English as the medium of instruction. Coures in Engineering and Medicine are offered by most of the Universities through English medium.